

The BYE-POST

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ed. Colin Stuart

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Here is our second newsletter in 2016, with a look back at the past year's activities and a look forward to our programme in the New Year. We are encouraged to report that attendance at our meetings has continued to hold up well, despite the wintery weather, though it is becoming more difficult to attract good outside speakers – our thanks go as ever to Rod for filling our 2016-17 programme, in which, unlike many other societies, we still meet twice-monthly. In **2017** we look forward to a New Year's informal gathering on **January 14th** - this replaces, but will be on the lines of our previous Christmas meetings, and will consist of quiz, a brief stamp showing, a one-page competition, and the usual revelry (but sadly, no visit from Santa this year).

On **April 25th** we had a visit by **Claude Crowder**, a notably good speaker, who gave us a very comprehensive, well-presented showing of mainly modern Spain, for which we thank him. Pleasingly, the meeting was well-attended. Then our 2016 programme concluded on **24th May** with the Spring Auction. (Am I the only member who wonders whether our Summer break begins a tad too early, with Easter barely over?).

The **2016-17** season opened on **10th September** with an informal session when six members showed material beginning with 'C'. We were treated to, among others, the Canadian Arctic, the Cocos Islands, Canadian Churches, Swedish Cruise-ship Correspondence and a miscellany of topics that included the Castle Series of GB. We were heartened by the volume and variety of members' responses. (Is it too early to guess that next year's theme letter will be 'D'?) Next, on the **26th Rod Crump** held the floor and gave us a substantial showing of European countries: Spain (including the Civil War), Scandinavian countries and Italy.

On **October 8th** was the **Autumn Fair** (thanks again, Roy and the ladies behind the tea-bar). Attendance and results were reportedly slightly down this time, maybe reflecting the small overall decline in the philatelic trade (?). As a part of the publicity for the Stamp Fair, in the two weeks leading up to it, Redbridge Ilford Library made five glass cabinets available to us which Richard Wood and myself used to lay out a display of stamps, and a bit about the history of our Society (founded 1936). Later in **October** we had another visit from **Keith Rowland** who gave us a wondrously detailed analysis of the designs, printings, proofs, errors, booklets and varieties in the British QE Wilding and Machin definitives. This year's **Autumn Auction** took place, very successfully, on **12th November** (**Coral Savage** officiated off-the-cuff when Rod Crump, our usual master auctioneer, became caught in traffic, and her clear, concise and efficient approach met with unanimous approval).

Tony Hoad entertained us on **November 28th** with a wide selection from his Commonwealth collection. He presented his material under five mainly 20thC. headings: African colonies, Tristan da Cunha (with insights into the extraordinary way of life there), Newfoundland (the WW1 'Caribou' series), Commonwealth Varieties, the Falkland Islands (the 'Map' and handsome 1933 Centenary issues). On Saturday **December 10th** we look forward to a showing of "African Airmails" by **John Rawlins**.

Looking farther back, our A.G.M. on **May 14th 2016** attracted rather fewer members than we would like, but our Committee was augmented by the addition of Mr **Richard Trottier**, whose contributions we very warmly welcome. All other officers were re-elected; the club finances are satisfactory; and no significant matters arose. Administration of the Packet had passed on from **Rod Crump** (he had run it for so long that he deserved a rest) to **Roy Simmons** – although he lives some distance away, in Suffolk, he is able to co-ordinate regularly with us, though there may occasionally be some longer delays.

Sadly, we lost our long-standing club member, **Tony Bower**, who had long endured poor health; **Tony Aked** (our President) unfortunately had a relapse in his struggle for full recovery, but happily he is on the mend again, and though he still finds it difficult to attend meetings, he would very much welcome members' visits, to stay in touch and lessen unavoidable isolation. Our Secretary, **Richard Wood**, has also had a recent health scare, but we are pleased to report that he is over the worst and looking forward to reappearing in a month or two. **David Pashby**, so long our 'anchor man', still writes from New Zealand where he very much misses his collections and his philatelic friends; he endured last month's second N.Z. major earthquake, unscathed thankfully, except for being thrown rudely out of bed at 2.30 a.m!

(And I have just happened on an old Programme for 1992-3. Three only of the then club officers are still serving : A.J.R. Aked, R.J. Crump and a certain R.A. Bates – a Long Service Medal, please, for all these venerable gentlemen!)

A couple of topics for members perhaps to think about : **1)** Rod does not find it easy to attract outside speakers or always to come up with inspired ideas to vary or enliven our meetings. Have you any early thoughts or suggestions for our next year's programme? **2)** Owing to successful management, the LWDPs has for many years run an untouched cash balance of several thousand pounds. It seems a pity not to put this to some beneficial use (especially since if/when the club terminates for any reason, any remaining balance would be lost to the Essex Federation). Again, have members any interesting / sensible ideas? The January meeting might be a good opportunity to air your thoughts.

Finally, the Society hopes all its members will have / have had a happy Christmas and New Year, that they enjoy the very best of health and wealth, and that all their wildest collecting dreams come true in 2017.

Finally, member Brian Page (82A Weaver's House, Wanstead E11 2SY, 07889834833) has old post-card lists, plus a selection of ten local Wanstead/West Essex/Epping/East London postcards to sell, these last for the sum of £2.50 (please contact him by phone)